

Public Testimony for Michigan House of Representatives Health Policy Committee
Wednesday, October 25, 2017

Dear Representative Vaupel and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lindsay Brieschke; I am the Director of Public Policy for the Alzheimer's Association Michigan Chapters. I am happy to speak this morning in support of HB 4674.

Currently there are over 180,000 Michigan residents living with Alzheimer's disease. For many people with this disease, long term care, such as a nursing home or assisted living, will be necessary in the later stages of the disease process. Although necessary, most people struggle with planning for this type of care. The cost of long term care is one of the biggest barriers to planning. A Genworth study in 2016 found that on average, a semi-private room in a nursing home costs \$225 per day or \$82,125 per year. As Michigan continues to age and rates of Alzheimer's and dementia increase, it will be ever more important for us to evaluate options and assist residents in planning, securing, and paying for long term care.

The Long Term Care Study bill will allow Michigan to fully understand the needs of Michigan residents and will also explore promising best practices in the state, such as the Michigan Dementia Care and Support Pilot Program (MDCSP). This program provided in home care and support for families facing dementia from October 2014 to October 2017. The goal of the pilot was to help Michigan residents with Alzheimer's and dementia to delay or prevent nursing home placement and save state dollars. Over the course of the program, third party evaluators found that on average, the probability of nursing home placement among participants was 15%. In comparison, the national average for placement is 24.5%. In addition, over the course of a program year, the MDCSP saved the state over \$5000,000 by keeping residents with dementia in their homes. This program is a just one best practice example that we hope the long term care study will highlight in order to make Michigan a leader in caring for those with Alzheimer's and dementia.

The Alzheimer's Association, Michigan Chapters, is happy to support HB 4674 - The Long Term Care Study Bill, which will assist in understanding barriers to long term care planning and will identify solutions that Michigan should take to assist residents in need.

Thank you for bringing this bill before your committee and for your continued support for Michigan residents and their care partners who are facing Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

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